

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

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SUBJECT: LONG-RANGE SPACE PROGRAM

REF: 77 TOKYO 12021

1. ON MARCH 17, SPACE ACTIVITIES COMMISSION (SAC) CHAIRED BY SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AGENCY DIRECTOR-GENERAL KUMAGAI DECIDED UPON A LONG-RANGE SPACE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM COVERING 15-YEAR PERIOD FROM 1978 THROUGH 1992. PROGRAM WAS CONTAINED IN REPORT ENTITLED BROAD OUTLINE OF POLICY FOR SPACE DEVELOPMENT SUBMITTED TO PRIME MINISTER FUKUDA THE SAME DAY. THIS IS FIRST TIME THAT SAC HAS MAPPED OUT A LONG-RANGE SPACE PROGRAM WHICH WILL SERVE AS GUIDELINE FOR JAPANESE SPACE ACTIVITIES.

2. PROGRAM CALLS FOR LAUNCHING AT LEAST 76 SATELLITES, INCLUDING 17 FOR COMMUNICATIONS, 39 FOR OBSERVATION, 14 FOR EXPERIMENTAL PURPOSES AND 6 FOR MULTIPLE USES. INCLUDED IN 39 OBSERVATION SATELLITES ARE AN UNMANNED SPACECRAFT TO BE LAUNCHED TO THE MOON BY 1985 AND TWO
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OTHERS TO VENUS BY 1990. THE LUNAR MISSION, TO BE LAUNCHED BY UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO'S THREE-STAGE MU ROCKET, WILL BE SIMILAR TO JAPAN'S FIFTH SCIENTIFIC SATELLITE, EXOS-A, LAUNCHED FEB. 4. EXOS-CLASS INTERPLANETARY PROBER WILL BE LAUNCHED TO VENUS BY THREE-STAGE N-2 ROCKET. AN H-1 (SECOND-STAGE LIQUID HYDROGEN PROPELLANT) ROCKET WILL ALSO LAUNCH A SIMILAR SPACECRAFT WHICH WILL

LAND AN OBSERVATION BALLOON ON THE PLANET. AN H-TYPE ROCKET WILL BE JAPAN'S MAINSTAY BOOSTER AFTER 1985. IT WILL BE CAPABLE OF ORBITING A SATELLITE WEIGHING 4-5 TONS AROUND THE EARTH AND OF PLACING A SATELLITE IN GEOSTATIONARY ORBIT WEIGHING 500-800 KILOGRAMS. IN THE FIELD OF MANNED SPACE FLIGHT, JAPAN WILL RELY ON SPACE SHUTTLE PROGRAM OF U.S. FOR TIME BEING. PROGRAM ENVISAGES A JAPANESE ASTRONAUT BOARDING A SPACE SHUTTLE IN 1983 TO CONDUCT METAL MATERIAL EXPERIMENTS. AFTER 1984, ONE TO THREE JAPANESE ASTRONAUTS WILL TAKE PART YEARLY IN THE U.S. SPACE SHUTTLE MISSION.

3. FUNDS NEEDED TO ACCOMPLISH THE 15-YEAR PROGRAM ARE ESTIMATED TO EXCEED YEN 3,000 BILLION (DOLS 13 BILLION AT CURRENT CONVERSION RATE) WHICH WILL ACCOUNT FOR 0.08 PCT OF GNP, OVER THE PERIOD.

4. STA'S INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DIVISION DIRECTOR MIURA HAS INFORMED SCICOUNS THAT STA PLANS TO COMPLETE AN ENGLISH VERSION OF REPORT IN ABOUT A MONTH.

5. COMMENT: ACCORDING TO SAC, PROJECTS IN LONG-RANGE SPACE PROGRAM HAVE BEEN SELECTED ON PRIORITY BASIS SO AS NOT TO NECESSITATE ANY MARKED INCREASE IN EXPENDITURE, BUT IT IS HIGHLY UNCERTAIN WHETHER JAPAN CAN FOOT THE BILL IN THE NEXT 15 YEARS TO CARRY OUT THE
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PROGRAM. GOJ SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY BUDGET FOR FY 1978 SETS ASIDE YEN 87 BILLION (DOLS 0.37 BILLION) FOR SPACE DEVELOPMENT. IT IS HARDLY LIKELY THAT THIS LEVEL OF FUNDING FOR SPACE PROGRAM WILL BE RAISED TO ABOUT DOLS 1 BILLION FOR EACH OF THE ENSUING 14 FISCAL YEARS. IN FACT, WE SUSPECT THAT THE PLAN IS MORE OF AN ATTEMPT TO PROVE TO FINANCE MINISTRY AND DIET THAT CURRENT PROGRAM REPRESENTS ROCK-BOTTOM SPACE EFFORT IN TERMS OF TOTAL JAPANESE ASPIRATIONS. REAL TEST WILL OCCUR IN DRAFTING AND APPROVAL OF FY 1979 BUDGET, WHEN IT WILL BECOME NECESSARY TO INITIATE R&D FUNDING OF SOME NEW PROJECTS. AS THINGS STAND TODAY, SPACE PROGRAM IS SECOND (AND ONLY BY SLIGHT MARGIN) TO NUCLEAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM IN TERMS OF GOJ-FINANCED R&D. IF A LARGER SPACE PROGRAM IN FACT MATERIALIZES, AND PARTICULARLY IF LUNAR OR PLANETARY MISSIONS ARE INVOLVED, A MARKED TURN IN DIRECTION FROM HIGHLY APPLIED R&D TO A GREATER INTEREST IN SCIENCE WILL BE SIGNIFIED. ANOTHER POINT OF INTEREST IN THE SAC PLAN IS THE HEAVY COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPMENT OF A HYDROGEN-FUELED SECOND STAGE FOR THE H VEHICLE. OTHER INDICATORS OF THIS INTENTION HAVE BEEN CLEAR, BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT A PUBLICIZED OFFICIAL STATEMENT IN

THIS DIRECTION HAS BEEN MADE, TO OUR RECOLLECTION. U.S.
AEROSPACE COMPANIES WITH INTERESTS IN JAPAN HAVE INFORMED
THE EMBASSY THAT IF THE MONEY IS FORTHCOMING, THERE ARE NO
TECHNICAL REASONS WHY JAPAN WILL NOT SUCCEED INDEPENDENTLY
IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A HIGH-PERFORMANCE SECOND STAGE.
MANSFIELD

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